C M 175 Mocobies, and the Palomos, which are almost at an end, all have the same customs, and are similar in every way, which is the reason for our lumping them together in order to speak of them as a whole, without differentiating between one and another. All are Caribs, eaters of human flesh, abominable in the extreme, untrustworthy and much given to warring, which flares up amongst them easily. They sometimes fight against the Guaycurús, and do so continuously against the Spanish although in their attacks upon the Spaniards they are more like thieves than soldiers for they never face them but rather attack by surprise and by ambush, making very sure before doing so of the enemy strength by C M 175 726 means of spies. These latter are tireless in their spying and will keep watch upon the Spanish positions for a year or two or three, observing everything very carefully under cover of darkness, to see whether they will meet with resistance or not, and until they are absolutely sure of their superiority, they bide their time; so when they do attack one can be sure that the result can be but one, and that there is no danger in it for them. These spies creep about at night on all fours, so that their elbows are covered with callouses, and they never attack, since they are alone, and if they are heard they scurry away with great ease, and some with the help of magic take the shape of some tame animal in order to go about their spyings more easily. Although they will not openly face the Spanish, they will, when escape is impossible, fight valorously, and sell their lives dearly, as can be seen every day and as was experienced five years ago by an officer commanding the regiment of the city of Santiago del Estero who, coming upon five Mocovíes in the forest, surrounded them with his men, but they resisted bravely, wounding many Spaniards before dying, and the last who remained alone with his wife, continued to keep up the battle, his wife supplying him with arms, and would not give himself up until he was riddled with bullets, having first wounded many Spaniards with his arrows, the C M 175 411 commanding officer almost mortally. The weapons which they all use [575] are arrows, clubs and darts, which they fashion expertly from a certain hard wood. Their darts are very long, about 15 hand breadths, and very heavy, but they use them with great dexterity and agility. The head is made from the antlers of deer, and is not firmly embedded in the shaft but rather is loose and has a small cord tied to it so that when the dart is jabbed into the body of an enemy and the shaft quickly snatched out, the point remains in the wound and the enemy kept from escaping by means of the cord, for the lance head cannot be pulled

although they retain their position of ministers of "foreign affairs," 701
representing the tribe before outsiders either to treat some matter,
or to form an alliance for either war or peace. And even then
their leadership is not of much value for the members of the tribe,
the populace, are free to refuse to go to war -- although actually
their pride only rarely allows them to hold back.

When a chief plans an attack he gets the advice of the old 721
men of the tribe and of other influential persons, and if these do
not set their approval upon his plan he nevertheless invites those
who will to follow him.

Sometimes, though, large scale invasions are planned by
the allied chiefs of several villages. When we arrived at the vil-
lage of Chaguaral, we found there a group of eleven or thirteen
chiefs, all Matacos, who were awaiting the arrival of [194] their
allies with whom, shortly thereafter, they invaded the territory
of other Matacos who three months earlier had given them a good
drubbing.

While they are on their way to wage war they vociferate 726●
wildly, shouting both threateningly and happily. They dye part
of their faces and bodies black and sometimes muss up their al- [302]
ready unkempt hair until they look like "lost souls," in the opinion
of a Christian Indian. On the eve of battle, those who have the
wherewithal deck their hair, waist and ankles with feathers, pre-
ferring red or yellow ones, and tie any rag they may have with
them tightly about their midriffs. When combat begins they
break out with the most bloodcurdling yells.

This business of putting on warpaint is common to almost 000
all savages: it was the custom also among those whom the Romans
called barbarians; for example, according to Claudius the
Sigambrians used to dye their hair a brilliant red before going into
battle.

The chiefs have the place of honour in the thickest of the 726
battle, which always results in the death of some of them. If the 622
invaders win, they sack everything, capture the women, the 727
children and cattle, parcel out the booty and set fire to the vil-
lage.

They give no quarter to the warriors and only rarely do they 727
spare the lives of the older women because they distrust them as

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI12

M 721

say. The Tobas certainly believe in witchcraft, but the rôle of this superstition as an originator of wars has evidently not been equally great as, for instance, among the Jibaros.

M 726

When an attack against an enemy is planned, the old men of each tribe (*eakáchi*) together with the chiefs (*alyáwk*) assemble every night to deliberate in a special place outside the village. Much algaroba beer is drunk on this occasion in order that the deliberations may lead to a happy result. In the shade of a big algaroba tree the old men invoke the »good spirit» (*peyák nóin*) so that he may give the warriors victory and protect them in the coming fight. The younger Toba men perform the dance *Nomi* for several days. Each sub-tribe marches out to war headed by its chief. But since these chiefs are often aged persons, too weak to perform their duty in the expedition successfully, a special leader is as a rule appointed by the old men when a war expedition is planned. This leader is generally a younger brother or some other relation of a chief, and he must of course have previously distinguished himself by courage and other warlike qualities.

T [493]

Photo W. Hanson.

Young Toba Indian mounted on muleback. Argentine Chaco.

T 411 177

The war weapons of the Tobas were formerly the bow and arrow and the club, made of hard *palo santo* wood. The latter, we are told, were as heavy as if they had been made of iron. But the Tobas early learnt to know the European horse and used horses in their wars also. According to Campos, the Tobas who fought on horseback did not use bow and arrows but long lances [2]). Lances of this kind are still used for hunting the wild boar. The Toba warriors also used armour of tiger-skin and had the head adorned with plumes. Body-painting, moreover, formed an important

T 714 302

[2]) Campos, *op. cit.* p. 230.

584 chooses a husband for his daughter, but he would never go
585 against his wife's wish. The ceremony is not celebrated.
The son-in-law lives first at the hut of his wife's father where
he stays for three months at least, working for him. Later
591 he can build a hut for himself. The young couple live in a
separate compartment.

Nowadays either the bride follows the bridegroom or he
595 goes to live with her, according to circumstances. Ordinarily
men have only one wife, some have two, but never more.
[593] Except for adultery a husband never beats his wife. Although
837 a woman is exposed to a severe beating if her husband discovers that she has betrayed him, it does not prevent many
women from doing so. A woman will choose a day when
her husband is absent and then send a child to tell her lover
that she is alone. A couple must not be seen together for
[578] there would be some gossip. A man generally leaves an
unfaithful wife after beating her first. He challenges his
[831] rival and they fight with knives. The different »milks»
must not be mixed up.

XVI. Chiefs

622 All the members of the tribe follow the *cacique* everywhere
without protest. As for him, he is responsible for all the
members of his group. If one of the latter has committed
[672] a theft, even outside of the tribe, the *cacique* will be arrested
by the police. Quarrels among members of the same group
[627] are settled by the *cacique*. If a big *cacique* is killed in a
[726] fight his troop retreats immediately, even if the other *caciques*
are still living.

XVII. War

726 In ancient times, when a young man was going to war,
825 he pinched the skin of his thigh and drove the sharpened
bone of a jaguar into it. This operation was supposed to
make the warrior courageous. Members of a war party
did the same with a peccari's bone so they would be fierce,

3: Metraux E-5 (1933) 1939 SI7 Mataco SI7

with a charata (bird, *Ortalis canicollis*) bone that they might rise early, and finally with an owl's bone in order to see and fight in the dark.

Matako always attack at daybreak. They kill only men, young or old, burn the village, and take away as captives the women and children. When my informant was a child his people fought against the Pilaga on the Pilcomayo where they had gone fishing. The last encounter between the Toba and the Matako took place four years ago (1929) near Pozo del Tigre. In consequence of that conflict, the Matako made prisoner a Toba woman, but later on they surrendered her to her people for a payment.

Toba children taken captive by the Matako were raised like Matako children. Later they married women of the tribe and had in general the same rights as the other members of the group.

Not so long ago the Matako practiced scalping. A man who took a scalp gave it to his wife who danced to express her joy at her husband's killing an enemy.

XVIII. Dances

The dances begin at sunset and are continued until one or two o'clock in the morning. These are only for unmarried people and the dancers are always surrounded by the children of the village; they enjoy these affairs very much. Children normally do not take part in the dances, but are sometimes admitted among the dancers in order that they may learn the songs and dances.

1. All participants form a circle with their faces toward the center, the right hand on the shoulder of the person to the right and the left hand on the waist of the person to the left. One of the dancers starts singing very slowly and everybody stamps rhythmically, the right foot marking the time. After a few notes all the dancers begin to sing. The rhythm of the song and the movement of the dancers become livelier and livelier and gradually the stamping develops

The Functions of the Chief

622 The ex-chief of the San Andrés region, on the Pilcomayo river, was the famous Cuchitoro, who received three leagues of land along the river from the government of Argentina. The present day chief of this region is called Santiago, and he was made chief by the white colonizers who hoped to win him to their service. Nevertheless, Santiago remained loyal to his people.

The principal functions of the chief, according to their [648] description to me at San Andrés, consist nowadays in representing his tribe before the whites and in patching up, amicably, any conflicts 622 arising between groups of Indians in his territory. If a murder is com- 627 mitted in one group it is the chief's duty to require the killer's family 682 to pay the blood price. The amount of such compensation depends upon the social status of the victim. If it is a matter of an old and inactive man the loss is considered of little importance and a couple of goats and an old rifle are sufficient to re-establish friendly relations between the victim's and the murderer's groups. In other cases the injured party demands a horse, three goats, a rifle, etc. If the blood price is put too high the chief in charge of the matter may seek out the head of the dead man's family and ask him to lower the price. [14]

682 In former times the law of an eye for an eye was meticulously carried out. The Indians of San Andrés had killed a man from a neighboring village whose inhabitants then emigrated to the Bermejo river. Fifteen years later a nephew of the dead man made the entire trip from the Bemejo to the Pilcomayo to square matters with the murderers and killed, in his turn, one of the Indians of the village. He then returned to the Bermejo without being pursued.

726 The last Indian war took place in the San Andrés region in 1928. The people of the village of San Martin attacked San Andrés, under cover of darkness. Firing continued until daylight, but--as often happens in these battles--no one was killed or wounded. Some time later the people of Yuto joined with the inhabitants of San Andrés to attack the San Martin Indians. They passed by the Mission composed and dressed for war, painted and adorned with feathers. Before the attack they executed a war dance in the bed of the Pilcomayo river,

726 which was dry at the time. Then, moving along the left bank, they came upon the people of San Martín from the rear, cutting off their retreat. A large number of the latter, mostly women and children [127] were killed or wounded. The Yuto people carried off a child with them as a prisoner.

Divers Religious Beliefs

776 158 Among the spirits the most to be feared are the wilan who possess their victims and sink them into a state of furious madness. Thus, in the San Patricio mission a young girl all at once became pale, her eyes starting from their sockets. She fled, bolting into the wooded area, where she remained for four days. Those who followed her said that her tracks disappeared as suddenly as if the girl had flown through the air.

Another girl got up from a fainting spell during which she had been under the care of four witch doctors and said that a spirit had entered her.

Here is a case which took place in San Andrés a short time before my arrival. A Mataco had gone off to some distance from the village in search of a horse. On the way back he imagined that he saw against [15] a tree, a small luminous being, about the size of a cooking pot, which leaped from tree to tree and finally disappeared in the underbrush. Frightened, our Indian fled to the village where he fell in a faint and was shaken by violent convulsions. Doctor C. Smith had to give him a morphine injection to quiet him. The Indian got better and a few days later felt well enough to go out into the surrounding area. On the way back he had the same experience and suffered like aberrations. His parents, shaking with fright, went to get the doctor so that he might give him an injection. According to Dr. C. Smith, such hallucinations may be the result of kidney trouble, which causes the diseased person to have optical illusions, especially the apparition of luminous spots before the eyes. Certain strange and sinister sounds, also, which the Mataco Indians attribute to spirits [82] are really made by nocturnal birds. And a meteor, which fell into the Pilcomayo during my stay there was explained to me by the Matacos as the fall of an old man with gray hair.